

The Marksman

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EDITORIAL

CARRYING FIREARMS

We understand that the Chief of the Philippine Constabulary has requested from Malacañan the issuance of an executive order, under Section 905 of the Revised Administrative Code, prohibiting the carrying of licensed firearms in all public places, except by persons who have an immediate need for a firearm in connection with the discharge of their lawful occupation.

We wish to express our sympathy for the motive prompting such a request, but we believe such an executive order would be too sweeping as to cause an injustice to licensed firearm holders throughout the Philippines. To give a few examples of how such order would prove impracticable: A businessman from the province comes to Manila, carrying a large sum of money, and therefore armed with a licensed revolver. He finishes his transaction, and in the evening wants to go a movie or dance-hall—what should he do with his gun? Leave it in his hotel or lodging house room (where the chances are that it will be stolen) or take it along with him? The answer is obvious. So long as conditions of peace and order in many of our municipalities, especially in the City of Manila, are unsatisfactory to the extent that robberies are rampant, such an

Our magazine cover for this issue shows Col. Antonio Torres, chief of police, pinning the gold medal on Patrolman Acosta of the Traffic Division, winner of the recent Manila Police Pistol Championship sponsored by the NRPA. The crack Traffic Division of Capt. Nievera won, hands down, the Farmacia Central Trophy for this year.

executive order would entail an injustice. Again, a licensed firearm holder goes out on a spin in his automobile, and meets an accident with a calesa. The cochero, who is notoriously insolent as a class, takes out an iron bar or a balisong during the ensuing argument. Isn't that the time for the car driver to have a firearm, the display of which is always sufficient to make the cochero behave? Yet, under the proposed executive order, the car driver with a licensed firearm will not be allowed to carry his gun.

We firmly believe that the prohibition of carrying duly licensed firearm is not the cure to this exhibitionistic tendency among our people. Does not a child react similarly when he has a toy which is rare and the envy of his playmates? To the Filipino, a revolver is a prized object, whose possession places him a notch higher than the rest of his countrymen. Why? Because the right to possess firearms belongs only to a limited few, to a very small percentage of the population.

There are only two permanent solutions to curbing the display of licensed firearms; either confiscate all existing licensed firearms, and issue new licenses on a very strict basis; or liberalize the issuing of firearms so that it may become commonplace to our people. Naturally, we favor the latter procedure, for we are convinced that since our plans for National Defense are based on a citizen army, our people must be trained as soon as possible in the intelligent and proper use of a firearm. And the sooner the government realizes this fundamental axiom, the sooner we need not fear foreign aggression in the event of independence.

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